

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 17, 1903

Beinn Bhreagh Nov. 17th 1903. Dear Alec,

It seems to me that we have got into a very unnecessary muddle about the management of the place, when we are at one for all practical purposes. I thoroughly approve of the division of the place into departments, and the operation of one from another, on the principle as you stated, of the states and the Union. Maine cannot go into Vermont or Mass, or either into Maine. Nor can the United States, except for certain purposes, but I would draw your attention to the fact that this exception is a rather big one. I think I am willing to say that the management of the estate shall be in accordance with the practice of States and the Union, and be pretty sure that I will get all I want as against you!

Let us see what the U. S. reserves or excepts. 1 The Right of Eminent Domain 2 Public Highways. 3. Forest Reservations. If so this is all I want. I am willing that the sheep department should have the boundaries that you propose, with the proviso that the woods are the Union's Forest reservation. The U. S. allows sheep grazing in its reservations subject to the general order that they shall not graze injuriously. The U. S. forester decides this question. 2. The highways are U. S. property maintained by it also Rivers and Harbors. I claim that our manager should care for our roads and have right of entrance on the different States for that. The States may have their own roads beside, and 2 one state may keep the public highway in better order than the U. S. requires but the U. S. has right of way and of supervision over the highways, and by right of eminent domain can put them where it wants take what land it wants for Union uses, and take what material it wants for the maintenance of the highways.

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Voila! Mabel G. Bell